CHARLES by the grace of God, King of *England, Scotland, France, & Ireland*, defender of the Faith, &c. To all and singular Archbishops, Bishops, Archdeacons, Deanes, and their Officials, Parsons, Vicars, Curates, and to all Spirituall persons; And also to all Justices of Peace, Maiors, Sheriffes, Bailiffes, Constables, Churchwardens, and Headboroughes; And to all Officers of Cities, Boroughes, and Townes corporate; And to all other Our Officers, Ministers, and Subiects whatsoeuer they be, aswell within Liberties, as without, to whom these presents shall come, greeting. Whereas we are credibly giuen to vnderstand, that by reason of grieuous visitation in this time of the great Contagion of the Plague amongst Our poore Subiects, in the Cities of London and Westminster, and Borough of Southwarke, and parts adioyning, the inhabitants of some Parishes and places are brought into such distresse, as that the Parishes are not able of themselues to support and releue the poore of the said Parishes, and to prouide for the infected, and for the necessary watching and warding of the houses which are shut; And albeit, the Justices of Peace haue done their best endeauours, by taxing the Parishes and Townes adiacent, to supply these wants and necessities; yet so many difficulties haue occurred, that although for the time past they haue prouided in some competent measure, yet by the continuance of the Infection, they finde the burden to grow euery day more and more heauy: Whereof Our selfe being informed on the twenty fifth of September last, haue with the aduice of Our Councell, thought fit, that for the present, a Collection should be made of the charitable Benevolences of well disposed people, within the Cities of London and Westminster, and in the Counties of Middlesex and Surrey, and Borough of Southwarke, and to the Benevolence of all Cities, Townes Corporate, Villages, and Priuiledged places within the said Counties, not extending the same further for the present; because it is hoped, that by Gods goodnesse, the Infection will abate (the Winter season, and cold weather now approaching) before it shall be needfull to pray the ayde of more remote Counties; Not doubting, but that all good Christians, duely considering the misery, and pitifull calamity, which so many poore distressed and deiected Christians doe vndergoe by such an inevitable and grieuous visitation, will in their owne pious commiseration of their great extremity, be herewith moued, out of the bowels of compassion, and forward, as feeling members one of anothers miseries, freely and willingly to extend their liberall Contributions towards the releefe and comfort of a number of wretched creatures in this their great necessity. KNOW YE therefore, that We well weighing the wofull and lamentable estates of Our said poore and distressed Subiects, and commiserating the same, of Our especiall grace, and Princely compassion doe giue and grant, that a Collection be made of the charitable deuotions, and liberalities of all Our louing Subiects, within the seuerall Counties, Cities, and Townes Corporate aboue named, for, and towards the releefe and succour of the said poore inhabitants of London, and other Infected places adioyning: Which Collection, We will, grant, appoint, and require, shall be ordered in manner and forme following: That is to say, We will, grant, appoint, and require all and singular Parsons, Vicars, Curats of the seuerall Churches and Chappels within the said Counties, Precincts, Cities, Villages, and Townes Corporate aboue mentioned, with all possible speed to publish, and recommend this Collection to the charity of all well disposed persons within their Churches and Precincts, with an especiall exhortation to the people, for the better stirring vp of their liberall and extraordinary Contributions in so good and charitable a deed. And We will and command, that you the Churchwardens of every Parish within the Counties, Cities, and places aforesaid respectiuely, to take a care of the furtherance of the said Collection: And if any houshoulder, or parishioner be absent when these Our Letters Patents shall be there published, you the said Churchwardens, to goe to the habitations of such persons, and to aske their charity for the purpose aforesaid: And what shall be by you so gathered, to be by the Minister and your selues, endorsed on the backside of these Our Letters Patens, or the Copy or Briefe hereof, in words at length, and not in figures, with your names subscribed thereunto: And the summe and summes of money so gathered and endorsed, to be paid ouer as is hereafter mentioned. And lastly, Our will and pleasure is, that the moneys Collected in Surrey, be paid ouer to the hands of Sir Thomas Grymes Knight, and Edward Bromefield Esquire, Justices of Peace in the said County of Surrey, for the present releefe of Southwarke, Newington and other places adiacent as stand in need by reason of the Infection. And the moneys collected in Middlesex, to be paid to the hands of Thomas Gardiner Esquire, Recorder of London, and to Iohn Herne Esquier, two of the Justices of Peace for the County of Middlesex, or to either of them, for the present releefe of Westminster, and other places in Middlesex adiacent, or neere to the Cities of London and Westminster, as stand in need by reason of the Infection. And the moneys Collected in London, to be paid to the Lord Maior there for the time being, and by him to be deliuered ouer, as there shall be any remainder at the end of his yeere, to his Successor: Which moneyes so Collected in London, to be, vpon conference betweene the said Lord Maior and Recorder of the City of London, disposed as shall be most needfull, not onely for the releefe of such places, as by reason of the Infection, doe, or shall stand in need, in London, Westminster, and Middlesex, but also as occasion and necessity shall require, shall out of the same adde thereunto to the ayde and releefe of Southwarke, Newington, and other places in Surrey, in manner and forme before recited, according to the true meaning of Our gracious intention by these Our Letters Patents; Any Statute, Law, Ordinance, or prouision heretofore made to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding. IN WITNES whereof We haue caused these Our Letters to be made Patents, for the space of foure whole moneths, next after the date hereof to endure.

WITNES Our selfe at Copt-hall, the seuenth day of October, in the twelfth yeere of Our Reigne.

Dawe.

God saue the King.

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